

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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70

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-05 COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 PC-04 IO-14 NIC-01 EUR-25

DRC-01 /166 W

----- 076952

R 091919Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3345

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINS, SCOI, PA

SUBJECT: CHURCH LIFTS EXCOMMUNICATION OF GOP OFFICIALS

REF: ASUNCION 5030, DECEMBER 26, 1973

1. IN A MASS HELD SEPTEMBER 8, ARCHBISHOP OF ASUNCION ISMAEL ROLON RESCINDED THE 1971 EXCOMMUNICATION OF MINISTER OF INTERIOR SABINO MONTANARO AND CHIEF OF NATIONAL POLICE FRANCISCO BRITZ. MONTANARO AND BRITZ WERE EXCOMMUNICATED ON MARCH 10, 1971, FOLLOWING THE ARREST IN ASUNCION OF AN URUGUAYAN PRIEST AND AN ATTACK BY A MOB ALLEGEDLY ORGANIZED BY BRITZ AGAINST AN URUGUAYAN BISHOP WHO HAD COME TO SEEK THE PRIEST'S RELEASE. ARCHBISHOP ROLON EXCOMMUNICATED ALL WHO PERPETRATED THE INCIDENT, SPECIFICALLY MENTIONING MONTANARO AND BRITZ. IN LIFTING THE EXCOMMUNICATION, ARCHBISHOP ROLON CITED THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH ON FORGIVENESS, ADDING

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THAT HIS ACTION SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS

INSENSITIVITY ON THE PART OF THE CHURCH TOWARD  
INJUSTICE AND WRONGDOING.

2. COMMENT: BOTH THE CHURCH AND THE STROESSNER REGIME  
HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR A NUMBER OF MONTHS TO REDUCE  
TENSIONS, WITH NUNCIO JOSE MEES PLAYING A SUBTLE BUT  
CRUCIAL ROLE AS CATALYST. WHILE FUNDAMENTAL  
CHURCH-STATE DIFFERENCES REMAIN (SEE REFTEL), THE  
LIFTING OF THE 1971 EXCOMMUNICATION REPRESENTS  
A SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD ACCOMMODATION.  
LANDAU

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CHURCH STATE RELATIONS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, POLITICAL LEADERS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 09 SEP 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** kelleyw0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974ASUNCI03730  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740250-0917  
**From:** ASUNCION  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740965/aaaaccve.tel  
**Line Count:** 72  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION ARA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** ASUNCION 5030, DECEMBER 26, 1973  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** kelleyw0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 23 MAY 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <23 MAY 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <10 MAR 2003 by kelleyw0>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CHURCH LIFTS EXCOMMUNICATION OF GOP OFFICIALS  
**TAGS:** PINS, SOCI, PA, (MONTANARO, SABINO), (BRITEZ, FRANCISCO)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005